

THE GATEWAY

volume XCVII summer issue 3 ♦ the official student newspaper at the university of alberta ♦ www.gateway.ualberta.ca ♦ thursday, 20 july, 2006



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: WEIYANG LIU, KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

FORZA ITALIA Large crowds gather at SUB to catch some hot and spicy World Cup action. The University of Alberta displayed the games on the screen at SUB stage to the delight of fans in attendance.

Food fight still rages over Aramark contract

CHLOÉ FEDIO
Managing Editor

The mandatory meal plan for Lister Hall students has been under fire lately as the cost of food continues to rise. Students are concerned about quality and choices, which is limited by the University's contract with Aramark.

Lister Hall Students' Association (LHSA) President Michael Janz explained that students have set up meal-card money boards to sell off dollars they don't want to spend on University food services.

"Whether you want to eat it or not, that \$1800 is locked in," Janz said.

Meal plans range between \$1800-\$3800, but Dima Utgoff, Director of Resident Services, said that the current minimum meal plan commitment is too low, according to an annual

evaluation, and will likely have to be increased.

"It's difficult to talk about raising commitment levels, because people look at that as the same as raising prices. But on the other hand, we need to be realistic," Utgoff said. "What happens is students think they are getting a good deal, but they run out like halfway or two-thirds of the way through the year and have to keep adding money onto their meal plan."

Meanwhile, Janz pointed to a lack of information directed to students from the University and Aramark on the topic.

"I think part of the problem is students are ill-informed about how much they should be able to eat on that amount. They assume for \$1800, they'll get a certain amount of meals

a day," Janz said. "It hasn't been accurately portrayed to students."

"It's difficult to talk about raising commitment levels, because people look at that as the same as raising prices. But on the other hand, we need to be realistic."

**DIMA UTGOFF,
DIRECTOR,
RESIDENT SERVICES**

Lorraine Eriksson, Manager of

Ancillary Services, agreed that communication with students has been a problem in the past. She noted that the University and Aramark are planning to create a greater liaison with students this year, to clarify the available meal plans and correct misinformation.

"One of the myths I know that goes around is that the food here is worse than prison food," she said, explaining that while Aramark does provide food to some prisons, they also have been contracted for higher profile events, such as the Olympics. "We want to put that to rest, day one."

Eriksson said that Lister Hall is revamping their food outlets, adding a variety of new healthy and fresh food choices, including more vegetarian options, which will be in place by 1 September.

Despite these proposed changes,

Janz is still concerned about the actual cost of food.

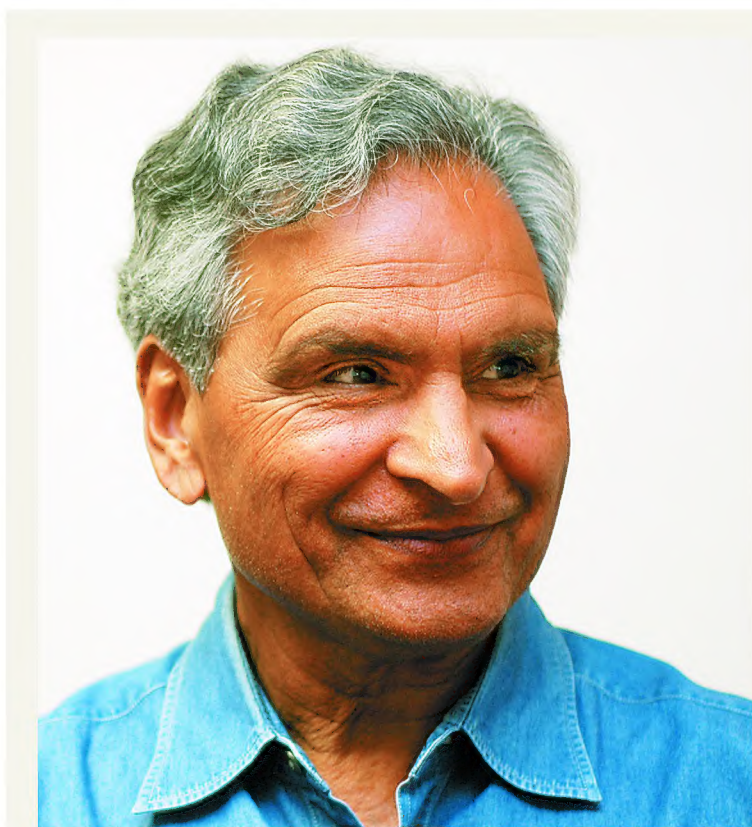
"They always say you can eat nutritiously. Well you can, but the fact is it's so expensive," Janz said. "We need to balance affordability with the other concerns as well."

Still, Eriksson said that the pricing is reviewed on an annual basis.

"We try to be middle of the road. We don't want to be highest—sometimes we will—and we don't want to be the lowest all the time—sometimes we will. We want to be about mid-range so that students are getting value for what they're paying," Eriksson said.

A possible alternative, which Janz said students have been promoting for the past three years, is a combined cooking and meal plan at a reduced commitment level.

PLEASE SEE AMARAK ♦ PAGE 2



SHAHEED MERANI

YOUNG AT HEART Pannu plans to devote more time to family and his writing.

Pannu bids farewell to politics

CHLOÉ FEDIO
Managing Editor

Raj Pannu, longtime member of the Alberta New Democrats, sits quietly in his office, collecting memories of the past ten years that he has spent in the Legislature. For the veteran MLA, usually engaged in political debate to represent the minority of orange supporters in a sea of Conservative blue, the moment of silence says a lot.

Representative of Edmonton-Strathcona since 1997, and leader of the provincial NDP between 2000 and 2004, Pannu has announced that he will not seek re-election when his current term ends.

One of only a handful of elected NDs in the province, 73-year-old Pannu had a full portfolio this year, working as a critic for up to seven different ministries and departments, including among them Advanced

Education. His tireless engagement in such a range of issues forced Pannu to do a lot of reading and research in order to be well versed in those various areas of debate.

"You bring with you as an academic lots of background knowledge and preparation that helps you stand up there and think on your feet and speak to bills."

**RAJ PANNU,
NDP ADVANCED
EDUCATION CRITIC**

"If you take your job seriously, then there's a great deal of opportunity to

learn new things, but it also requires putting lots of effort and personal time, and that means finding time for each of the various responsibilities that you're discharging at the same time," says Pannu.

The unique political culture of his riding, which strays from the general conservative values manifest in the rest of Alberta, has traditionally elected representatives with more communitarian values.

"I was one of those few lucky ones who got elected the very first time," says Pannu, who squeaked onto the political scene in 1997, winning the riding with a mere 58 votes over his Liberal opponent. "Having been an academic was also very helpful, because you bring with you as an academic lots of background knowledge and preparation that helps you stand up there and think on your feet and speak to bills."

PLEASE SEE PANNU ♦ PAGE 2

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Loving the un-loved

The Oilers (and every other NHL team out there) may not heart Igor Ulanov, but obsessive Heather Smith sure does.

SPORTS, PAGE 11



I luv to culler picshers!

Mike Robertson's 6-year-old cousin, Thomas, sits in on a very special colour edition of Haley's Comix.

COMICS, PAGE 12

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colophon

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SU launches task force to review U of A food services

ARAMARK • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"I think having a reduced option is probably the best bet for students," Janz said. "They can always buy the smaller plan and upgrade later if they so chose."

But Eriksson argued that with 33–44 students on each floor, there simply aren't enough cooking accommodations for everyone, especially in the three older Lister towers, which have a single sink and stove on each floor.

"Those residences were never built for cooking. There's not enough power, there's not enough room, there's not enough fridges. We put them in sort of as a service for our students to supplement," Eriksson said.

However, Janz disagreed.

"I believe that's completely untrue. Students already are [cooking]. By March and April [of last year], we were hearing that from students, that almost their whole floors were cooking at some point during the day, sort of in staggered patterns," Janz said.

Chris Cunningham, Students'

Union Vice-President (Operations and Finance), said that the SU has opened up discussion with the University, who has been under contract with Aramark since 1994, and is organizing a task force on food services.

"We just don't think we're getting necessarily the best bang for our buck," Cunningham said, explaining that aside from the stated concerns from Lister Hall, the SU isn't satisfied with the cost and quality of food from Aramark on the rest of campus.

He went on to say that major concerns have already been brought to the administration's attention—more specifically that the contract, which was renegotiated in 2005 without student input, won't be up for renewal until 2010, limiting any changes. The SU has recently submitted a request to see the contract, and Cunningham is hopeful that it will be approved.

"They were surprisingly okay with that," he said, noting that this is just the beginning of a greater challenge. "The contract itself is a freakin' phone



PHIL HEAD

BON APPÉTIT Students would like to cook some of their own meals, says Janz.

book. I certainly don't want to be the one going through that with a fine-toothed comb."

The Gateway's request to view the contract is currently under review by the University administration.

Pannu will miss working with youth

PANNU • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

From India, Pannu came to Canada with his wife in 1962, a year after the federal NDP was established.

"We very quickly began to learn about the different shades of politics, of political philosophy in Canada," Pannu says. "In politics, they say timing matters, timing is very, very important and I think we chose the right time to enter Canada in 1962."

Pannu was interested in Canadian-style socialism, which spoke to his Indian roots.

"India was a very vibrant political democracy at that time—we had just emerged out of British colonialism after a long struggle against it for independence. So as kids growing up, in high school and then in college, university, we were very much engaged in the politics of the time," Pannu recalls.

He and his wife first settled in the small community of Whitecourt to teach high school. They eventu-

ally moved to Edmonton to be closer to the University of Alberta, where Pannu studied as a graduate student, receiving a PhD in Sociology in 1971. Pannu spent 30 years as a professor on campus and says he still enjoys the vibrancy of youth populations.

"Since then, I have pursued my interest in youth on an ongoing basis—that's why I don't feel old, though I'm years older," Pannu says. "I've spent my life with young people—that keeps you young."

Pannu looks forward to travelling and spending more time with his family, but it won't be all relaxation—he's hoping to do some writing and is open to other projects.

"I've never really worried about what I'm going to do next time. Every time I've stopped doing something, something else happened, and I've found every next thing that I've done more exciting than the thing that I did previously," Pannu says. "So who knows what's in store next for me."

CAMPUS CRIME BEAT

Compiled by Scott Lilwall

LOTS OF BARK, BUT THEY HAD NO BITE

On 14 June, at about midnight, a Campus 5-0 member happened upon a heated argument between two of groups of people on the corner of 82 Avenue and 112 Street. One of the groups claimed that the members of the other had threatened them, claiming to possess a knife. Campus 5-0 contacted the Edmonton Police Service, who quickly arrived at the scene. One of the men was taken into custody for uttering threats, while two others were arrested for public intoxication.

PULLING THE PLUG ON ENTREPRENEUR

On 3 July, Campus 5-0 received word that a student was improperly using the U of A web access to run a retail business. The would-be retailer was apparently cashing in by selling items such as handbags, wallets and other items over the Internet. The bold business person's computer user privileges have been pulled, and Code of Student Behavior charges against the individual are pending.

LECHEROUS LEERING IN THE LIBRARY

On 4 July, at about 1:30pm, a woman reported that, while studying at a work desk in the Rutherford library, a man crawled under the barrier and was attempting to take a gander up her skirt.

She described the crawling creep as being in his mid 40s, with dark, curly hair, which was cut short. The peeping Tom was dressed conservatively, wearing a blue-striped dress shirt, blue jeans and glasses.

Any person who thinks they might know the man, or anyone with any information about the case, is asked to contact Campus Security Services immediately at 492-5252.

TWO-BIT, TWO-WHEELED THIEF NABBED

On 26 June at 2pm, 5-0 received a report of a suspicious man inspecting bike locks at the racks near Hub Mall. Upon arriving at the scene, Campus Security witnessed the man remove a bike from the racks and attempt to ride away with it. The bike thief was quickly stopped by 5-0 and was eventually identified as having been trespassing from the campus on previous occasions.

The foiled master criminal was quickly placed under arrest and the stolen bicycle was returned. The arrested man didn't have any affiliation with the University of Alberta.

STREETERS

With the Israeli bombings in Lebanon, the federal government is preparing to evacuate over 50 000 Canadians from the country.

Do you think the Canadian government has an obligation to evacuate its citizens from a country at war?



Sheena Rossiter
Arts IV



Sam Afshar
Bio Sci III



Tara Tancred
Immunology III



Nolan Dueck
Arts II

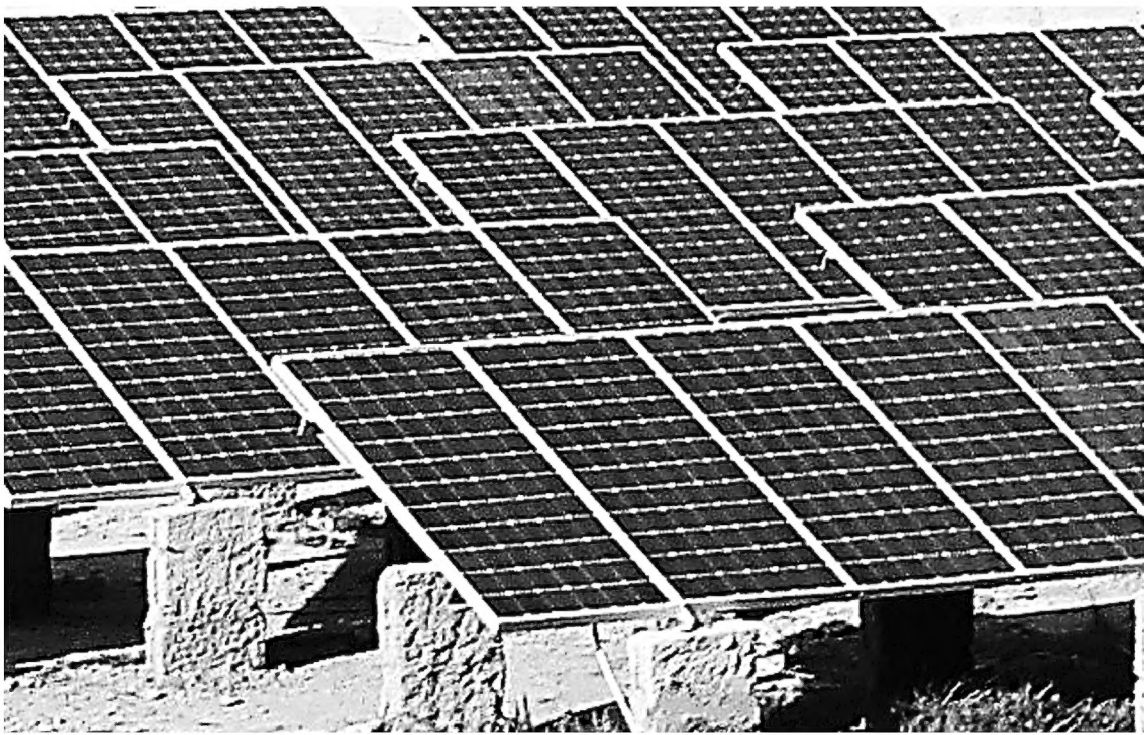
Yeah, I do think that there is a partial obligation there, for sure.

Yes, if they are Canadian citizens, I think the government should look after it's people.

I do absolutely feel that there is an obligation. These are Canadian citizens, and if they are in an area where they are in a lot of danger, I think there's the responsibility to get them out of there. And then, I don't think they are well equipped enough to get all the citizens out. I think that more could be done to utilize the resources of other nations, like Americans jumping on a French ship.

Yeah, I think so. Canadian citizens living abroad, yeah, I'd say that the government has an obligation to care for the citizens, in general.

Compiled and photographed by Scott Lilwall and Mike Kendrick



POWER TO THE PEOPLE Wohlgemuth's internship involved installing solar panel systems in rural Cuba. The power generated was used by schools and medical clinics in the area, many of which had been working without electricity.

Grad plans bright future for rural Cuba

KIM MISUTKA
News Staff

After a year of teaching in a Québec high school as an english-language monitor, University of Alberta engineering graduate Dwayne Wohlgemuth travelled to Cuba for a internship to immerse himself in yet another culture while working with solar electricity projects in rural communities.

“In most areas of the tropics, solar energy is quite practical, reliable, and does not require expensive studies beforehand to know there is enough sun to make the system practical and economical.”

**DWAYNE WOHLGEMUTH,
U OF A ENGINEERING GRADUATE**

His five-month internship was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, and was offered

through a non-governmental organization in Trois-Rivières, Québec. The aim of Wohlgemuth's project was to help with a United Nations initiative aimed at eliminating global poverty.

Wohlgemuth participated in an existing six-year program, started by Cuban organizations, to install 60 solar panel systems and four medical clinics.

“The first installation we helped with, for example, was a nine kilowatt system for a high school in a remote mountainous area,” Wohlgemuth explained. “A nine kilowatt system is quite huge for solar, including 90 solar panels with a total area of approximately 100 square meters. This is now the second biggest solar system in Cuba.”

In addition to being a learning experience, installing solar panels allowed Wohlgemuth to see the effects his work had on the surrounding community.

“For schools, the project meant computers and televisions, both of which are important for delivering courses to remote areas. For medical clinics, the project meant refrigeration for medicine and vaccinations, lighting for medical examinations, and televisions that allowed the rural family doctors to take courses offered through distance education,” Wohlgemuth said.

Wohlgemuth also noted that, as

with many tropical countries, a number of people living in Cuba's rural areas go without electricity. “In Cuba, this is limited to 4.5 per cent of the population, due to the Socialist Revolution of 1959, but many other countries have much larger populations still without electricity,” Wohlgemuth said.

Solar energy is a big factor in how Cuba generates its energy, as it can be produced cheaply without the need to install power lines and large generating stations, Wohlgemuth explained.

“In most areas of the tropics, solar energy is quite practical, reliable, and does not require expensive studies beforehand to know there is enough sun to make the system practical and economical,” he added.

The Cuban population living without electricity would have an advantage with solar energy; however, for those people in rural areas, it's impractical to place power lines in various parts of the land.

“With solar energy, [those in rural areas] have access to news, thus feeling less isolated. [They] would have access to distance education courses through television and would have indoor lighting in the evenings in order to read and enjoy many other activities,” Wohlgemuth said.

NEWS BRIEFS

Compiled by Steffi Rosskopf and Krystina Sulatycki

PROJECT SENDS STUDENTS TO WASHINGTON WITH MR SMITHSONIAN

With the introduction of the Alberta-Smithsonian Internship Program, 50 Alberta students will get the chance to study with one of the world's most recognized institutions. The program, a five-year partnership between the Alberta government, the University of Alberta and the Smithsonian Institution, was announced earlier this month in Washington, DC. The \$300 000 program will be funded by the province, administered by the U of A, and is available to students studying at any postsecondary institution in Alberta. Ten internships each year, each worth up to \$6000, will enable the participating students to study in their chosen field at one of the 28 Smithsonian institutions throughout the world,

without having to worry about the associated travel, accommodation or health-care costs.

The Alberta government hopes that the program will give the students an invaluable international experience. “Students will have a rich and rewarding educational experience and will greatly expand their international knowledge and their connections to our neighbors to the south,” said Denis Herard, Minister of Advanced Education, at a press conference to announce the program.

The internship is the first of its kind between an Alberta university and the Smithsonian Institution. “[The program provides] professional development opportunities for Alberta students to work with Smithsonian scholars, scientists, experts, and educators,” explained Richard Kurin, Director of the Smithsonian Centre for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and Acting Director, Smithsonian National Programs. The program is also expected to benefit the work of the Smithsonian by increasing the sharing of knowledge and resources between the Washington institution and Alberta.

GRAD STUDENTS RECEIVE AWARDS FOR WORK ON ADVANCED DEGREES

Commitment to a high academic standard has paid off for 35 students taking graduate-level studies in Alberta. Five \$5000 scholarships were granted to masters students in the areas of music, drama, dance, literary arts and visual arts. Additionally, 15 scholarships of between \$15 000 and \$20 000 were awarded to masters and doctoral students continuing their education in Alberta. These awards were presented in the name of Ralph Steinhauer, former lieutenant-governor of Alberta and Order of Canada recipient.

An additional 15 scholarships were presented to Albertans studying outside of Alberta, both within Canada and abroad, in honour of Sir James Loughheed.

Loughheed, a lawyer from Calgary, later held a seat in the Senate and lead the national Military Hospitals Commission after WWI. In total, \$500 000 was disbursed in the form of scholarships funded by the provincial government. The awards were a part of the planned \$52 million dollars to be distributed through 50 scholarship programs funded by the Alberta government.

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july 20 - 23rd

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With special guest and playboy playmate DJ Miss Lisa outside in the tent. Inside after-party with special guest and playboy playmate DJ Tamara Sky. The sexiest party Edmonton has ever seen!

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CONNECTED

Red Bull

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All drinks in the tent \$4, all night.

Adam Gregory July 23rd

The Bank, and their staff go country 1 night only with Alberta's own Adam Gregory outside!

Very exclusive 9pm show Tickets just \$25

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or go to www.thebankultralounge.com

Book your after work, or late night function
today, including VIP tickets to our shows.
Space is filling up very fast so call
Mike Sainchuk today at 780.910.5560

Bell Globemedia sets its sights on global domination

CANADIANS WHO GOT THEIR midday news from CHUM radio were in for a bit of a surprise last Wednesday, 12 July, when a \$1.4 million deal saw CHUM's assets become a part of Bell Globemedia, resulting in the loss of 281 jobs and the subsequent closure of a number of news desks across the country.

To media watchdogs, this is just one more chapter in the long, steady story of media centralization in Canada. For the sake of the uninitiated, however, let's take a quick look at how two of Canada's major media conglomerates choose to cast their nets wide, as the scope of these corporations is truly astounding.

Bell Globemedia's selected assets include the *Globe and Mail*, CTV, CTV Newsnet, The Comedy Network, MTV Canada, the Discovery Channel, OLN and ESPN Canada, TSN/RDS, some 19 local television stations (including our own CFRN) and, of course, their cellular and satellite empires as well. With the purchase of CHUM, Globemedia has also gained 33 radio stations, 21 specialty channels such as MuchMusic, Bravo and Space, and the twelve channels under the Citytv/A Channel banner.

As for rival CanWest, they own the Global Television Network (a rather ominous name, come to think of it), along with approximately 25 local television stations and a large stack of newspapers, including Victoria's *Times Colonist*, the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Vancouver Province* (published in the same building, even), the *Calgary Herald*, the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Regina Leader-Post*, the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* and *Saskatoon Sun*, the *Windsor Star*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Halifax Daily News*, the St John's *Telegram*, the *National Post*, the now-defunct *Dose* magazine and some 24 others.

This means that, aside from the publicly owned CBC, basically the only major English news source missing from this list is the *Toronto Star*, whose parent company, Torstar—owner of, in addition to the *Star*, the *Hamilton Spectator*, the *Guelph Mercury* and over 70 other Toronto-area publications, along with a Harlequin-romance publishing house—is currently awaiting regulatory approval for its desired 20 per cent of the Bell Globemedia pie.

Let's speculate for a second: what are the possible consequences of having just two companies control the networks and newspapers in every major Canadian city? We need look no further than the tacit agreement between Shaw and Rogers that dictates which cities each company will provide with cable-television service. Their only competitor—that is, each other—out of the way, each provider is free to act monopolistically, setting its prices and customer-service standards accordingly. No wonder it took months to get my internet service installed.

My personal online addictions aside, imagine the dangers of a similar, all-too-plausible super-merger between CanWest Global and Bell Globemedia. Having no choice when it comes to who plugs in your cable is one thing, but I'd like to be able to choose who tells me what to think, thanks very much.

Of course, the corporate benefits of this would-be oligopoly are obvious: guaranteed market share and relative editorial immunity are just a couple of things to look forward to. It all makes for healthy profits, if not good newspapers. On the bright side, think of how much easier it will be to fuel the Oilers-Flames rivalry when Edmonton has only the *Globe* and Calgary the *Post*. Things tend to get a bit dicey, however, when we need to make an informed decision that may actually affect our lives.

MATT FREHNER
Editor-in-Chief

Harper to the rescue

A HAIKU ABOUT Canada's evacuation efforts:

Forget Hezbollah
Our ex-pats are safe with Steve
Mr Harper rulz!!!

ADAM GAUMONT
Poet

LETTERS

Laxton has it all wrong

CB Laxton undoubtedly has strong—if uninformed—opinions on the directions past, present and future of feminism (re: "Pedant propounds peculiar pre-sexual parlance," 8 June). But since that debate has been heard over and over again in this publication and many others, I'll respect most of his opinions and not try to change them.

What I will try and change, though, is his notion that women's outreach groups are pointless because they "promote equality by helping only one group: women."

While Mr Laxton is quick to point out that they are also "wrong and sexist," he apparently doesn't take the time to consider that women who come from "battered homes" (assuming he means that the women are battered, not the houses themselves) or who have "suffered the afflictions of starvation and abusive families" often have children—even male children!

Exactly how is it "wrong and sexist" to provide the basic necessities for poor women and their children? How is it "wrong and sexist" to provide for women who may not be able to provide for themselves and their children (or future children)?

Women's outreach groups are just trying to help women get on their feet and break the cycles of abuse and poverty—and it just so happens that women, especially single mothers, are making up a larger and larger proportion of those under the poverty line.

You see, Mr Laxton, feminists would also like a world where a person was "weighted for their sins and virtues, not their gender."

ALANA KNOPP
Arts IV

Hard Stuff review bbb-bad to the bone

Ugggggh! How could you say that (re: CD review, "George Thorogood & the Destroyers, 8 June)? *The Hard Stuff* is one of the best albums ever!

Sure, I agree that some of the songs sound similar to songs that George Thorogood has done in the past, but the songs are good in unique ways!

And I like this style of music. Sure it sounds the same, but who cares? It will live on forever!

JANE SMITH
Whereabouts unknown

Who do you love, Matthew Barrett?

The 2004 Album was on the top of Billboard's list of Blues Albums for most of 2005.

You don't care for the band—that much is clear. When Culture Club makes a comeback, I'll value your opinion.

"STEVE"
Houston, TX

Move it on over, you frigid music snob

In regard to your review of George Thorogood's *The Hard Stuff*, not all



MATT FREHNER

bands or their fan base want to hear far reaching, pretentious and twee experimental post-modern "rock" (please see Arcade Fire).

Much like AC/DC, who I revere, GT&D have made the same album for nearly 30 years. As Alberta's resident wanna-be Lester Bangs, you fail to realize this.

May you continue to languish in your nowhere town, somewhere north of the Canadian border. You deserve your frozen obscurity.

JIM SUHLER
Whereabouts unknown

Get a haircut, I want your job

To bad you gave *The Hard Stuff* a bad rap. I love it. Next time have someone that *likes* blues do it. Stick to Mrs Spears and country music, please. Hee heee. I know you are just doing your job. Great gig if you can get it!

"COWBOY"
Whereabouts unknown

Just the facts on global warming, please

Sir: allow me to introduce you to the fact that no proof exists that lower emissions reduce global warming (re: "An Inconvenient Truth a convenient documentary about global warming," 8 June).

HERBERT GLASS
Whereabouts unknown

Hindsight: still 20/20

Dear Gateway: I will tell you where you are wrong (re: "Surname-less

Brazilians will take World Cup," 8 June). The best football league in the World is [in] Spain, and Brazil and Argentina can be compared to its Real Madrid and Barcelona clubs respectively.

The Brazilian defence is too old, and Argentina won't be the first team to give Brazil the run-around. Argentina under Jose Pekerman have left out Zanetti, one of the finest full backs in the world—that's how strong they are.

One other team I believe you have got wrong is Ecuador. We all know that playing in the rarified air of Quito, they are invincible against anybody, but away they are the opposite. I saw them play at the Maracana in Rio against Brazil, and they outplayed Brazil for 70 minutes.

If it is legal where you are, bet on Argentina at nine-to-one to win the Cup. Take an Argentina-Holland final at 40-1 or so, as lately in major competitions two teams from same group have competed the final (I tipped Greece-Portugal Euro 2004 by the way).

BARRY BERNSTEIN
England, UK

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libelous or otherwise hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, student identification number, program and year of study to be considered.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

It's time for the fellas to butt out, too

Your editorial on "Girls on Smoking" of your last issue reflects harshly on the "worst half" of our species.

You said: "We share with many other men the feeling that the sight of a girl smoking anywhere is distinctly revolting."

I entirely agree with you. But why are men, so justly revolted by the smoking of a girl, not equally indignant at the sight of a man injecting his organism with poisonous smoke?

What difference can sex make? Is not the body of the male human being just as sacred and holy a temple as that of a female? Should it not be kept equally clean and pure?

I reject the state of inferiority to which your article relegates the male sex. It is a common opinion that smoking and drinking are less objectionable in a man than in a woman. Does it mean that women have the monopoly of refinement, while nothing but coarseness can be hoped for from a man?

Really I cannot understand why the question of sex intervenes. I fail to see why a man is not as human as a woman—I mean why he should not respect his body just as much as a woman is expected to respect hers.

SYLVUS
12 December, 1921

Harper's real hidden agenda: eliminating the noble penny



ADAM GAUMONT

Leading up to this year's federal election, we heard tell (mainly from the Liberal camp) of the "hidden agenda" that Stephen Harper and his Conservative cohorts were sure to deploy upon being elected.

The warning signs were all there: Harper's endorsement of the Bush administration and the war in Iraq, his close ties with right-wing think-tanks and lobby groups, his popularity among the business community, close ties to Big Oil, his decentralist, anti-federal western roots—to say nothing of the largely stifled murmurings from his decidedly more fundamentalist fellow candidates.

However, seven months and one victorious election later, it's become clear that, a few income-tax cuts and ixnayed environmental policies aside, Harper et al have for the most part kept their dangerous, far-right leanings—if they do in fact have any—to themselves. Or at least, that's how it would appear.

Like any successful propagandist,

Harper is far too subtle to simply impose his most controversial policies outright and for all to see, especially not so soon after a tumultuous election period and with a weak minority government to boot. But if you look more closely at the policies the Conservatives implemented so far—vague, indisputable reforms that they promised in their election platform and, as a result, were actually able to keep—then it becomes apparent that a true hidden agenda is getting played out.

The first sinister stage in this plan has already been put in place—though its true aim may surprise you. I'm talking about the recent GST reduction, which reduces this much-loathed consumer tax from its original seven per cent to a much more agreeable six per cent—savings, Harper claims, which will add up to approximately \$400 a year for average Canadian households.

Now, put aside for a moment the problems with lowering taxes on consumption rather than production; after all, 400 bucks is 400 bucks, and, unless you live in Alberta, that's about as sweet of a handout as you'll ever get from The Man. That much dinero could buy you a month's worth of gas, an iPod, or even an NHL jersey!

The bigger problem, then, is not what *has* happened, but what's *going*

to happen. In other words, cutting GST to six per cent is all well and good—other than the fact that it's been shown to save businesses more money than average Canadians, and that in many cases, as with liquor sales and, uh, Calgarians, consumers won't even see this price drop.

Cutting the GST to a proposed five per cent, on the other hand, though it means yet more money in the pockets of Canadians, also means that Canadians will have one less coin there. I'm talking, of course, about the noble penny.

Think about it: if GST is at five per cent, then almost every price will become a multiple of five, including, obviously, any pre-GST price-point that is a multiple of five or ten, of which there are many. The remaining prices (including the ubiquitous 99-cent tag) could easily be changed by business owners—at the behest, naturally, of our business-friendly PM, who has it easily within his power to lower corporate taxes even further.

Now, if all final prices become a multiple of five, then what is left of our oldest and proudest coin? Sure, you *could* fork over five pennies instead of a nickel, but you don't even do that now, do you? In fact, I'll bet you've even quit picking up quarters off the ground at this point, let alone



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

PENNY FOR YOU THOUGHTS? There's a lot of change going on right now.

the little maple-leaf-bedecked coppers worth one twenty-fifth their value.

The French have bid the *centime* adieu; the Spanish have said *hasta luego* to the *peseta*; ditto for the Italians and their *lira*. The way it looks right now, our one-cent coin looks to be headed in the same direction.

Even more troubling to consider, however, is what's next on Harper's

hit list. The proud beaver? The gracious moose? The righteous loon? Is relegating the sacred maple leaf to the scrap heap not enough? If you don't want this to happen to your money—our money—then I encourage you to write to your MP and make your voice heard. Choose your Canada, people, and choose your Canadian currency. Just say no to further GST reduction!

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New!

U of A
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See the full policy: www.registrar.ualberta.ca/ecomunications

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► See the Academic Information and Communication Technologies (AICT) website at www.ualberta.ca/AICT for detailed information on CCIDs, conditions of use and related privileges.

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Don't knock feminism until you try it



NINA VARSAVA

Last semester, a student in one of my English classes was called upon to give a feminist interpretation of the novel we were studying. She did, and then immediately assured the class that she wasn't a feminist or anything.

In fact, she repeated it about five times, as if to identify as a feminist was on par with admitting that you're a Nazi. I was left wondering what this woman thought about feminism and where she got her ideas.

The popular conception of feminism is oversimplified and full of mistaken assumptions. Before even studying the subject or talking to feminists, many people tend to shun feminism as a radical and outdated waste of time. Feminists are lumped together as a bunch of irrational, man-hating extremists by people who have never actually studied feminism or had a real discussion with a feminist.

Ironically, the people who are taking women's studies, feminist philosophy and gender studies classes often already identify themselves as feminists, and already have a considerable understanding of feminism in its many forms.

Unfortunately, most people never take one of these classes, nor do they

research the subject independently. Instead, they form their ideas about feminism based on mainstream societal conceptions—conceptions that are founded on a gross lack of valid information.

It's easy to see why a woman might be hesitant to call herself a feminist. Because the label has so many negative connotations, and elicits many (often false) assumptions, many people shy away from it.

Some people even fear a reversal of power wherein feminism will get out of control and the oppression of men will be the next great injustice. But these people are just a bunch of irrational, women-hating extremists.

When I call myself a feminist, I frequently have to defend myself, and then proceed to explain why I'm wearing makeup, or a short skirt, or why I have a boyfriend; after all, those aren't very feminist things to do. Sadly, it's often easier not to assert my feminism than to explain it to someone who thinks they already have it all figured out.

But it's crucial for feminists to bring their opinions outside of the

classroom, even though it's often difficult and disheartening. If we show people how reasonable and diverse feminists can be, then perhaps its negative and undesired subtext will begin to dissolve, and society will begin to attain a truer understanding of the movement as one that calls for gender equality.

Admittedly, the prospect of this change is terrifying to many. Some people even fear a reversal of power wherein feminism will get out of control and the oppression of men will be the next great injustice. But these people are simply ridiculous—just a bunch of irrational, women-hating extremists.

Feminism is and has always been about gender equality. Of course, it comes in various forms, and as a result feminists often have different and conflicting ideas about how gender equality can best be achieved. There's even a minority of radical, militant feminists who want women to take over the world—but it's ridiculous and unjust to dismiss feminism altogether based on the beliefs and actions of this minority.

Some claim that it's time for feminists to rest, that women are now equal to men, and have nothing left to fight for. Although these people might just be ridiculously misinformed, I think that they're actually anxious about women's growing power and influence in the world. The longer feminism lasts, and the more strength it gains, the more likely it is that women will gain worldwide equality.

Love of labour lost on today's students

There's nothing like a shitty summer job to make you want to boost your GPA



AMANDA TERMEER

less shifts and boredom cause students to reconsider their desire to be free. That said, this type of experience is important, for by having lousy, mindless summer jobs, we will appreciate a career even more.

Most people are blinded by the false notion that the lifestyle around the corner is always ideal. Instead of focusing on the negatives of the present day, students should realize that both the drudgery of summer and the stress of academia are part of our informal education. Without experiencing the life of both an academic and a minimum-wage worker, we are liable to become prejudiced towards one or the other.

People who live solely in either of these two extremes exist in a black-and-white world. Life-long academics can often be snobby and ungrateful for those who provide low-paying (but still necessary) services. On the other hand, working-class labourers who refuse to open up a book or educate themselves about current events are simply ignorant, and less likely to vote or properly embrace society as a result.

University is merely preparation for entering the realm of financially independent adult life. Most students eventually leave the world of academia behind and enter the working world instead.

Those who remain become perma-students, forever forging their marks in the little known corners of the academic world with doctorates, post-doctorates, and all sorts of lovely pieces of work. The rest of us, on the other hand, will leave school with a fancy piece of paper and eventually settle down with a steady job.

By working during the summer, we are better able to appreciate the freedoms of the school year. Instead of yearning for the next best thing, students should appreciate every day,

whether hours are spent studying, working or partying. As students, we must strive to understand both worlds for a complete education.

THE BURLAP SACK

Last week, while enjoying a relaxing Saturday-afternoon lunch with my parents at Southgate Mall, I returned to the parking lot to be met with a rather unpleasant surprise. My car, parked out in the open, surrounded by other vehicles and in broad daylight, had been tampered with, the locks all but destroyed.

Thankfully, it appeared the would-be perpetrators fled the scene before gaining access to my motor vehicle, a testament to the fact that my car is an impenetrable fortress—or so I always thought.

Alas, my car's triumph was short-lived, for a mere week later, tragedy struck again. Stepping into my ride after work, I noticed something was amiss—someone had been in my car.

Including my burned '80s mix CDs, the estimated value of this theft was likely well over \$3, but insurance doesn't account for the emotional damages from knowing one's car is no longer a safe haven.

Damn you, Southgate thieves, and damn you mall security for not protecting my belongings! Into the sack with all of you!

MIKE KENDRICK

The Burlap Sack is a semi-regular feature where a person or group who needs to be put in a sack and beaten is ridiculed in print. No sack beatings are actually administered.



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MSTRKRFT: masters of porno and robot noises

Toronto remix duo tunes out popular dance music and opens their ears to more influential, unconventional sounds



MSTRKRFT

With *The Juan Maclean and Lazaro Casanova*
Wednesday, 26 July at 9pm
Starlite Room

TIM PEPPIN

Arts & Entertainment Staff

"Porno or techno? It's hard to say. I like robots, but I don't really own any robots. Robots are fun, but the whole robot aspect of it is inherent in electronic music. So yeah, I'd say pornography's a bigger influence."

Although Al Puodziukas, one of the members of Toronto-based duo MSTRKRFT, might have a bit of trouble pinpointing why carnal activity frames his music more than electronic blips and bleeps, he's certain that his musical style is one of a kind. MSTRKRFT—pronounced "mastercraft," not Mr. Kraft—is known for squeezing out thick, beefy, twitching electronica remixes of songs from popular groups such as Metric and Buck 65, and so far, the closest anyone has gotten to describing their sound is by comparing it to Daft Punk, or to a whacked-out robo-DJ riding the beat like it was getting away. However, from Puodziukas' perspective, both he and band mate Jesse Keeler (better known for his work with Death From Above 1979) couldn't care less about what their music sounds like—they just want it to be different than all other remixed work.

"If something is boring and sounds really normal then we probably wouldn't continue recording it," Puodziukas says. "There are a lot of remixers and dance-music producers who grew up with [remixed music] and have played it for years, but we kind of come from a musical mixed background, like Jesse's history with DEA 1979 and the other rock outfits that he's played with."

"I also have a pop music past," Puodziukas continues. "That's another thing; we're arranging a lot of our music like pop songs rather than dance songs, and some more obviously than others. Even if it's not obvious, there's a certain subliminal arrangement in that song that people identify with. I mean, they're listening to a club dance

track, but it's really a pop song in disguise."

But whipping out remixes aren't the only game the two know how to play. MSTRKRFT recently released their new album entitled *The Looks*, which was produced entirely by the pair. According to Puodziukas, MSTRKRFT's reputation stems from their success with their last album, *Easy Love*, and from doing remixes, but when it comes down to choosing whether they enjoy producing remakes or recording original work, neither comes before the other.

"Obviously, when you're remixing a track, you've got some sort of starting point, a starting element. A lot of the time an original track is rubbish, and sometimes, the whole point of remixing is to take a track that the artist doesn't know what to do with and to breathe new life into it."

AL PUODZIUKAS, MSTRKRFT

"Both can be difficult in their own way," Puodziukas explains. "Obviously, when you're remixing a track, you've got some sort of starting point, a starting element. A lot of the time an original track is rubbish, and sometimes, the whole point of remixing is to take a track that the artist doesn't know what to do with and to breathe new life into it."

"A lot of the frustrations of doing a remix—like the 'Oh, I have to use something from this track' moments—aren't there when you're doing original stuff. But then again, there's a whole different set of frustrations in recording original tracks—like inspiration, [and] coming up with ideas and stuff."

Evelyn Strange takes a stroll down Shakespeare's comedic lane

Evelyn Strange

Directed by Stewart Lemoine
Starring Jeff Haslam, Ron Pederson, Davina Stewart, and Shannon Blanchet
Runs until July 29
Varscona Theatre

MATT FREHNER
Editor-in-Chief

It's safe to say that Stewart Lemoine is Edmonton's very own 20th century Shakespeare. His poetry may not be quite up to snuff, mind you, and he may have yet to pen a superb tragedy, but his prolific nature and penchant for stretching already strained story lines can rival even the bard himself.

As is with most of old Bill's comedies, Lemoine spins tired plot devices and unbelievable circumstances into coherent and absolutely hilarious two-hour romps. For instance, *Evelyn Strange*, first produced in 1993, uses a healthy hatred of German opera to launch a sordid murder mystery, complete with amnesia, adultery and mistaken identity, in reserved 1950s New York.

Newcomer Shannon Blanchet is perfectly absurd as Evelyn Strange, an amnesiac with a penchant for clinical observation. Her demure innocence is supplemented by Ron Pederson (an Edmontonian who has spent the last four years with *Mad-TV*) as Perry Spangler, the awkward-but-well-meaning sub-editor at a non-descript New York publishing house. The tone

of their relationship—Evelyn disbursing a continuous stream of non sequiturs to the polite befuddlement of Perry—is set by the opening scene when Evelyn mentions that, while Perry is going to use the men's restroom, she, in fact, used the women's.

The cast is rounded out by Spangler's co-worker and counterpoint Lewis Hake (Jeff Haslam) and woman-about-town Nina Ferrer (Davina Stewart), who also happens to be the boss' wife. It's with these two characters that the pace suffers in the first act, but, as the tension increases, the ensemble is able to break through the lulls. With some tightening in the flatter sections of the play, *Evelyn Strange* could have been truly superb.

Though the script and the timing slip at points, specifically in scenes that lack the title character, *Evelyn Strange*'s cast is strong enough to pull through the ruts and take advantage when the writing's bang on. Indeed, as with any Lemoine production, success comes through the actors' utter commitment, regardless of how far the play descends into idiocy and improbability.

Bringing it all together, Mike Takats' lighting and set design evoke the time period exceptionally well, especially with the second act's centerpiece, a superb—and probably extremely uncomfortable—'50s-era mint-green sofa. The set is so thoroughly '50s, in fact, that Lemoine has already had heaps of purchase offers from nostalgic theatre-goers.

Now in its third run, *Evelyn Strange* is top-notch Lemoine. Don't expect any *Hamlet*-esque



JACKSON HINTON

HELLO, STRANGER Teatro la Quindicina brings *Evelyn Strange* to life once again at the Varscona.

insights into the human condition or tear-jerking performances, but don't disregard this piece as a mere fluff comedy, either. After all, everyone

knows that it's the clever one-liners and complicated love triangles that made Shakespeare's work so famous.

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The dark side of the world

A Scanner Darkly zooms in on the American drug trade

A Scanner Darkly

Directed by Richard Linklater

Starring Keanu Reeves, Robert Downey Jr, Woody Harrelson, Winona Ryder and Rory Cochrane
Now Playing

MIKE KENDRICK
Design & Production Editor

In the near future, we will be under constant, omnipresent surveillance, our every action categorized and logged by scanners capable of seeing straight through us. The abstract wars on terror and drugs will have devoured themselves to birth a hybrid of paranoia and police-state regulation. At least, such is the setting painted by director Richard Linklater in *A Scanner Darkly*, the screenplay adaptation of sci-fi author Phillip K Dick's prophetic thriller.

The film stars Keanu Reeves as Robert Arctor, a tormented man completely unaware of who or what he is, working as an undercover police officer in a sting operation as a new and incredibly powerful synthetic drug—known as Substance D—begins to circulate across America, blazing out of control. Arctor, posing as an addict himself, resides in a house full of pill-popping lowlifes and dealers, attempting to work his way up the hierarchy to the local source of the drug. But as Substance D seeps into his life, Arctor begins to lose his grip on everything around him, including himself. The resulting trip is a surreal journey of lost lives, false loves and forgotten opportunities. Arctor must find himself before he can begin to discover the identities of those around him.

The casting in *A Scanner Darkly* is exceptional. While Reeves can easily be criticized for playing only characters like *The Matrix*'s Neo, this is exactly the type of character that makes Arctor's tormented state so fitting. In an amusing and effective supporting role—inspired, perhaps, by real life—Robert Downey Jr plays the paranoid drug addict who resides in Arctor's house. Donna Hawthorne, a drug dealer who is the target of a police sting and the love interest of Arctor, is played by Winona Ryder who rounds out the lead roles perfectly, along with Rory Cochrane and Woody Harrelson in animated bit-parts.

Using an oft-overlooked but visually stimulating animation technique, the first thing that makes *A Scanner Darkly* truly stand out is the

marriage of live action film to computerized cell shading. Film frames are painted over with a posterized two-dimensional rendering, similar to Linklater's earlier work *Waking Life*. The end result is a film that is both animated and realistic, with effects that blend seamlessly into the psychedelic settings. And, because so much of the movie is seen from the perspective of Arctor under the influence of Substance D, the bleeding colours and morphing shapes simulate the effects of a heavy acid trip so well that the return to the crisp and clear images produced by surveillance cameras feels unsettlingly out of place.

***A Scanner Darkly* may not portray an entirely accurate vision of the future, as implied by Phillip K Dick's parting words in the film, but it certainly offers a plunge into the depths of the human psyche, tortured by the self-destructive acts of the body.**

The film certainly warrants multiple viewings, if not for its breathtaking visuals, then for its intricately interwoven plot. However, everything from the camera shots to the narrative are so often taken from Arctor's first-person perspective that it's easy to become as confused and overwhelmed by the world around him as he is. It's also easy to get lost in a scene and feel as though you've just missed something relevant, despite the fact that there was seemingly nothing there. Much of this perplexity could probably be remedied by watching a DVD release, or by simply reading the original novel.

A Scanner Darkly may not portray an entirely accurate vision of the future, as is implied by Phillip K Dick's parting words in the film, but it certainly offers a plunge into the depths of the human psyche, tortured by the self-destructive acts of the body. Although we can never really see through to the soul, *Scanner* can see through the darkness and into the drug-trade core itself.

Prey lures in players with impressive weapons, gravity acrobatics

Prey
XBOX 360
3D Realms
Humanhead Studios
Rated M for Mature
On sale now

RAMIN OSTAD
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Ten years ago, 3D Realms—the creators of the popular *Duke Nukem* franchise—announced an ambitious shooter entitled *Prey*, a game that followed the storyline of a Cherokee man who gets abducted by aliens. At the time, it stunned the gaming community with its ingenious Portal technology, boasting doorways that opened out of thin air and transported you to different parts of the map. Almost a decade later, *Prey* is finally upon us, and time has done wonders for it.

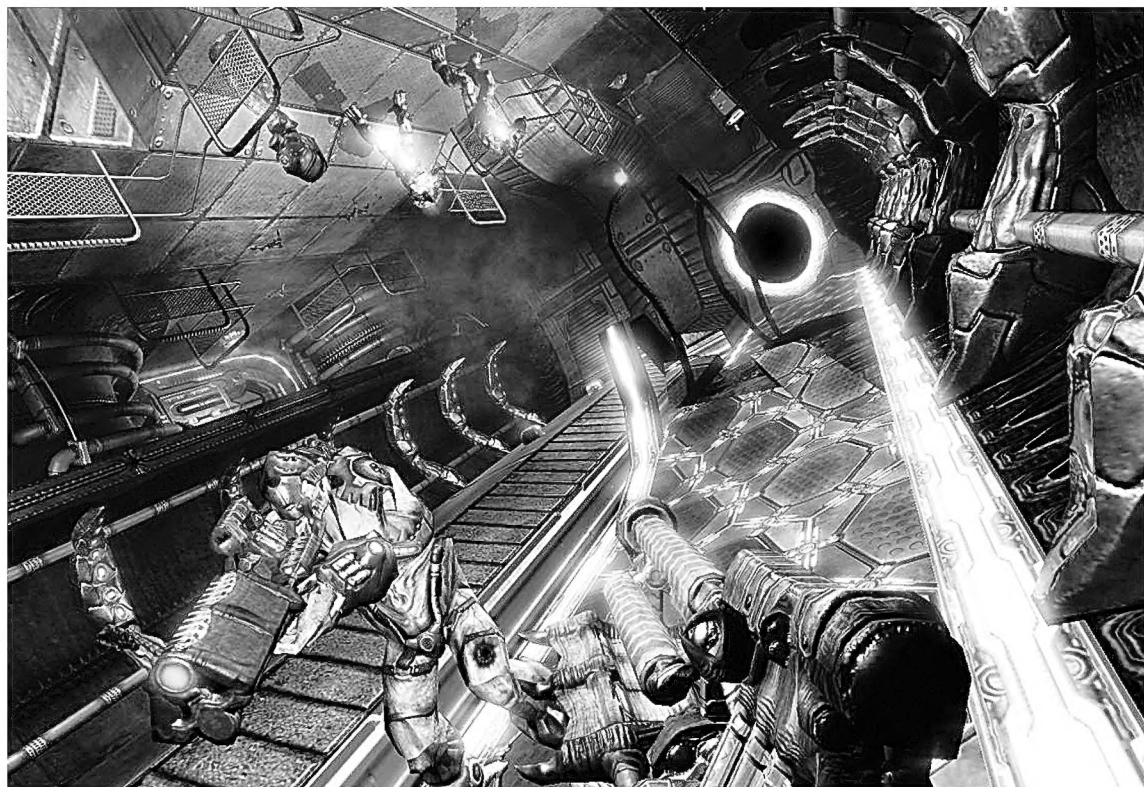
You play as Tommy, a Native American ex-military brat whose sole wish is to escape the Native reserve he and his girlfriend Jen live on. As he tries to convince her to leave the reserve with him—despite the wishes of his grandfather, who wants him to embrace his Native heritage—the three of them are abducted by aliens and must escape the alien sphere that is wreaking havoc on the earth. The action unfolds around you in real time without any cut scenes, all the while following Tommy's perspective. His struggle is always kept pertinent by his comments on the situations surrounding him during play. Great voice work is also used all around, including an appearance by famed conspiracy nut Art Bell, as himself.

Prey's most unique features are its manipulation of gravity, and, of course, the Portal system. The game toys with

gravity in a couple different ways. Some rooms have switches that you can shoot, directing gravity towards whichever wall the switch is on, and others have catwalks that allow you to walk up walls, hang upside-down and disorient you in ways you wouldn't imagine. And, just when you think you've gotten the hang of things, the game throws plenty of obstacles your way, forcing you to combine Portal travelling, wall-walking and gravity flipping in order to make your way through the alien ship. These features also make for some intense multiplayer action, though the limited types of play—death match and team death match—make the multiplayer feel somewhat like an afterthought.

Both of the player modes fit nicely with the level design and general ambiance of the alien ship. The game makes effective use of the *Doom 3* engine to create eerily organic environments and some impressive graphical feats, combined with expansive outdoor settings which you traverse in a shuttle, reminiscent of the old *Descent* games. Oddly enough, the gravity flipping very rarely feels contrived or out of place. However, the hallmark Portal system is used somewhat ineffectively. Since the game has a linear level design, the Portals are really nothing more than flashy doors—not to say they're unimpressive, but you get the feeling that they could have been a lot more interesting.

The organic design of the game's visuals also takes a hold of the weapons in *Prey*. Although they're used in the same way as any conventional shooter, almost every weapon in the game seems like it could have a mind of its own. Your grenades, for example, are actually these little insects



that explode when you rip off one of their limbs. There's also a chain gun that's literally an alien arm, as well as a leech gun that drains energy from certain energy nodes that provide various types of ammunition. The real beauty behind these weapons, however, is that unlike most shooters, each weapon is only really effective against certain types of enemies, obliging you to think fast when there's more than one kind of enemy coming your way.

Being kept on your toes is good, since there's very little in the way of challenge in *Prey*. While the action never really lets up during the game, the enemy AI isn't all that sharp. Some of your enemies will take cover or

try to grenade you on occasion, but in general they all exploit the Portal system to pop up anywhere and everywhere in large waves. Though it avoids the "monster closet" effect that *Doom 3* had, it often feels like the enemies just aren't enough—either that or you were trained in the military for alien hunting.

It also doesn't help that death is sort of a non-event in the game. Early on, Tommy is taught by his grandfather to "spirit walk"—to leave his body and travel as a spirit. This, like gravity flipping, is mostly used as a puzzle-solving device. However, it also allows you to survive death, taking you to a spirit realm where you must shoot at

red and blue wraiths to regain your health and spirit before you are transported right back to where you died. This is all done seamlessly, but it also takes away much of the challenge. Death becomes more of an annoyance than any real threat.

Despite these gripes, *Prey* is still an entertaining game with some unique innovations, an immersive if not borrowed storyline—stick around after the credits roll—and plenty of action to keep you going. While there are certain elements that feel unfulfilled—like the use of Portals, and the rather shallow use of Native American mysticism—*Prey* is a game I can easily recommend.

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Bears hockey star pursues professional career

2005 Finals MVP Ben Thomson is forgoing his last two seasons of CIS eligibility for an amateur tryout with the Houston Aeros

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI
Sports Staff

A year ago, it was celebrated head coach Rob Daum who was taking off for the American Hockey League's Houston Aeros. Three months ago, it was defensive rock Chris Ovington who opted for an early departure from Edmonton, landing with the Aeros. Last week, all-star forward Ben Thomson also cut short his stay with the Golden Bears and joined Daum and Ovington as he signed an amateur tryout contract with Houston.

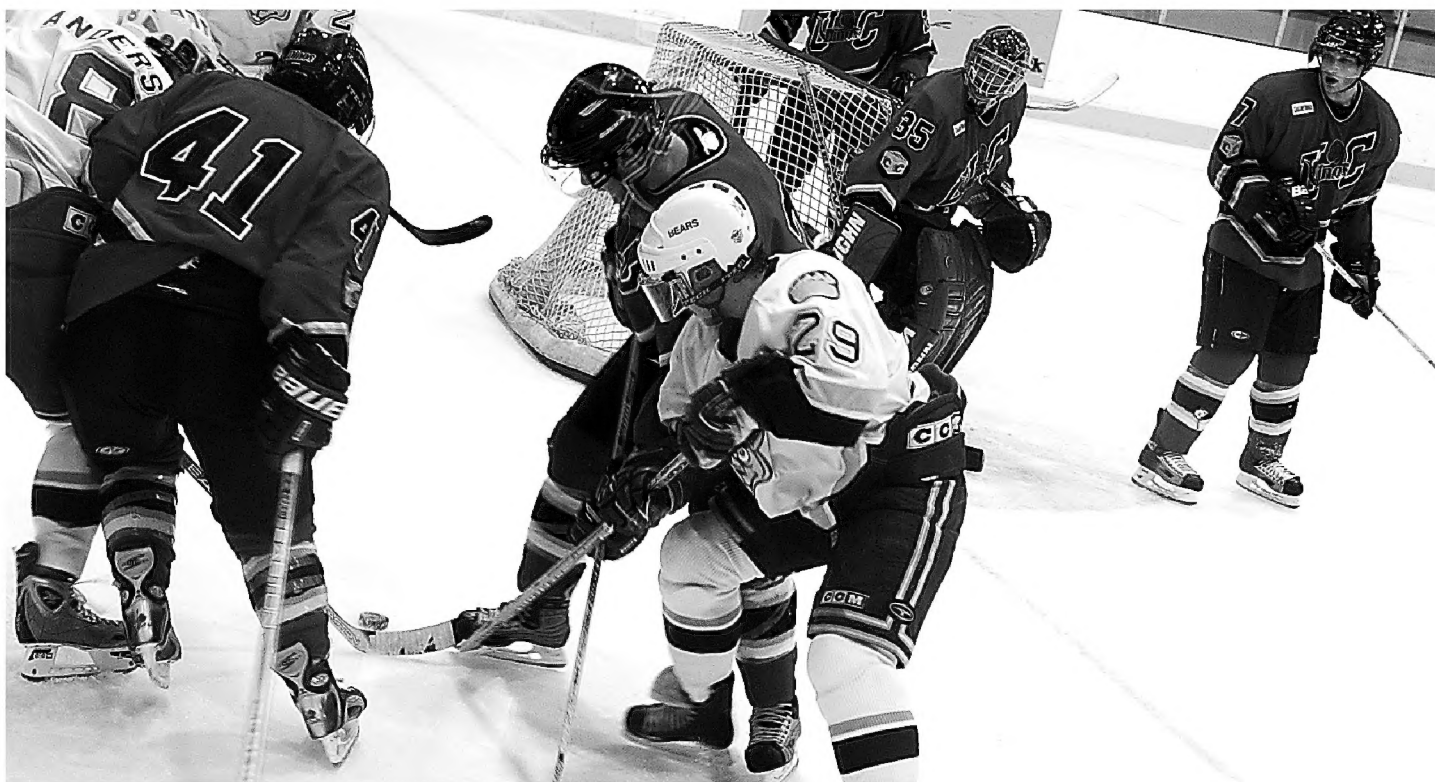
"The opportunity [to play in the AHL] came about after we won the University Cup in [2004/05]," Thomson said. "But, I felt that personally I wasn't ready to make that commitment yet. But this year, after analyzing my options and how I feel as I player, I think I was ready this year. I realize that I'm 24 and that I'm not getting any younger."

Though he only played three years for the Bears, Thomson became an offensive and emotional leader for the team and amassed 160 points in just 130 games including the game-tying goal late in regulation of the 2005 championship game and the game-winner in the ensuing overtime.

However, while he feels that the championships were important and believes they made him better player, Thomson noted that they aren't the memories that stand out for him from his time with the Bears.

"I think the little things that people don't get to see within the dressing room are the things that I'm going to remember and miss the most," said the two-time conference all-star.

"There are so many stories and memories with the guys I've made best friends with in the dressing room and that's something that no one can



MATT FREHNER

LEAVING ON A JET PLANE Thomson (29) takes flight for the Houston Aeros, and takes my heart with him for winning the 2005 Telus Cup.

take away from me."

Thomson believes that the reduction and removal of hooking and holding from professional hockey will benefit him enormously as he attempts to break into the AHL. The fact that he played for two seasons under Daum will also smooth his transition into the professional game—though he isn't taking anything for granted.

"There's no doubt that the brand of hockey that's played now is more exciting and it's geared more

towards players that are skilled and [have] speed, and that's where my game is played," Thomson said. "That will make some aspects of the transition [between CIS and the AHL] a little easier, but it's still going to be a tough challenge—but that's a mountain that I'm willing to climb."

With his departure and the previous decision of Ovington not to return to Alberta in the fall, the Bears will need some younger players to produce more if they are to capture three titles in a row.

However, Thomson believes that the team has the talent and something else that will ensure the Bears program continues its success.

"The one special thing about the Golden Bears is that everyone who puts on that jersey is made accountable to what the reputation of being a Golden Bear is about—and even though I'm going to be leaving, there's lots of heart and soul in that dressing room, and the program has never been stronger," he said.

Former Bear Cory at crossroads after twelve NHL seasons

PAUL OWEN
Sports Editor

For a city that celebrates its local hockey heroes like no other, it's hard to understand why Cory Cross was unsuccessful here. Locals Messier, Fuhr, Pisani and even Comrie all became fan favourites thanks to their local roots, but the Lloydminster native who played for the Golden Bears from 1990–1993 found it difficult to endear himself to the local crowds.

"[The pressure from the fans] was uncalled for in my eyes. I don't know why the people got on me as bad as they did, knowing that I was from the city and I didn't say anything bad against the fans," says the twelve-year NHL veteran.

Most Canadian prospects play in the major junior leagues or go south to play NCAA hockey, but Cross almost gave up on hockey coming out of high school.

"I finished midget in Lloyd and decided to quit hockey. There wasn't a lot of interest—I had one token WHL tryout—and I said forget it," he explains.

Enrolled at the University of Alberta, Cross took a first-year hockey course and wound up being recruited for the team. Through the Bears, Cross was then selected first overall by Tampa Bay in a supplemental draft upon their addition to the NHL in 1992.

Cross, a hulking stay-at-home defenceman, spent time with the Lightning, Maple Leafs and Rangers before being traded to the Oilers on 11 March, 2003. Unfortunately for Cross, he never found his niche with the Oilers, and often found himself in the press box on game days.

"[The biggest thing that affected me] was just my confidence, and I think that came more from the coach than from the fans. I'd have a few good

games, then I got hurt, and that set me back a little bit and I guess I just had a tough time fitting in, in the coach's eyes," says Cross. "It's tough to play [when you don't play everyday] because you're on a fine line: if you make a mistake it's magnified and you won't play the next game. It's tough to play the game that way; you go out there thinking about not making mistakes."

A mid-season trade to Pittsburgh this year relieved Cross of the high expectations of the Oiler fan base, but a rebuilding Penguins squad was not the answer for the 35-year-old veteran, who requested a trade soon afterwards.

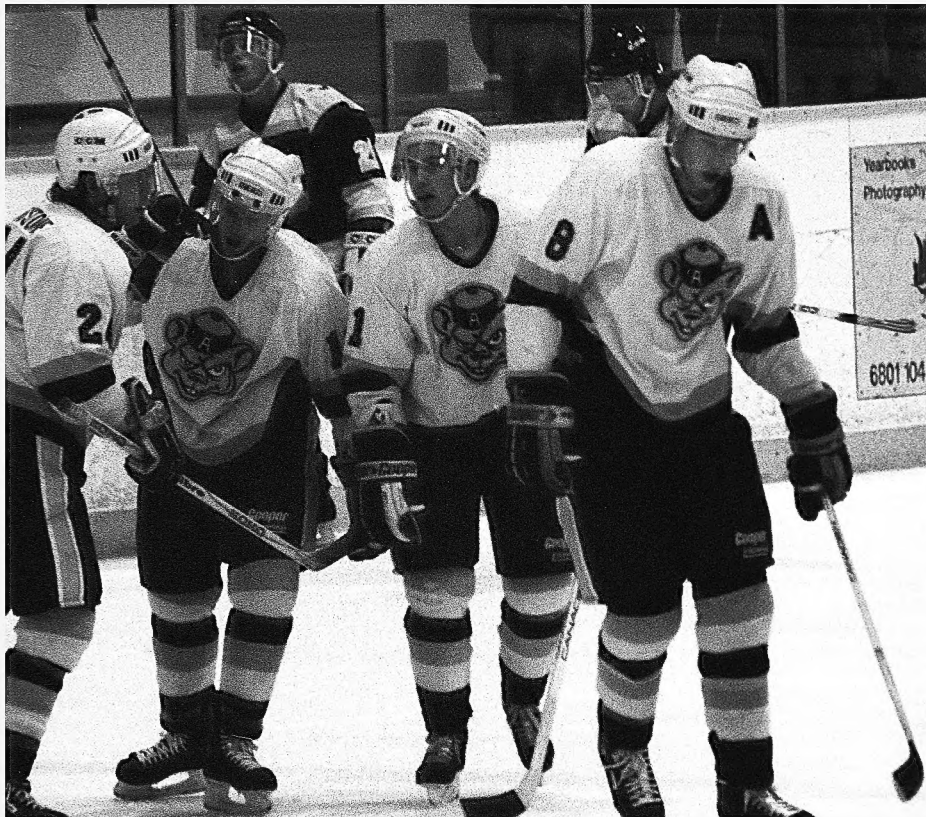
"I felt bad to leave Edmonton, but at the time I felt like it was good for me. The season was a bit of a struggle and I was having a tough time getting my confidence. I was actually excited about getting traded, even though it was Pittsburgh, because I was looking for a new start. Pittsburgh didn't go that well because they were just looking for young guys to play and as an older guy, there wasn't much room for me," Cross says.

A second trade to Detroit seemed a perfect fit to Cross, as he thought them to be a Stanley Cup favourite, but a first-round loss to the Oilers would spoil that dream. Though Cross regrets not playing in the playoffs, he was happy to see his former teammates go so far.

"I was happy for the guys. I've got a lot of good friends on the team and I was cheering for them. It was a tough year for a lot of the guys," he says.

"[Former Oiler teammate] Dan Cleary and I drove home together from the airport a lot, and I said that I would like to meet the Oilers [in the first round], but that I was scared of the Oilers, and Dan had the same thoughts."

The new NHL leaves Cross a more traditional defenceman in what he calls a "faster, more offensive" game. Cross is an unrestricted



FILE PHOTO: EVAN PETRIE

CRAP THAT'S AN OLD PICTURE! Cory Cross (8) has come a long way since this 1992 photo.

free agent, but a lack of interest has led him to consider positions in Sweden, Germany or Switzerland. While Cross is nearing retirement and would like to coach, he hopes to wait at least one more year.

"Unfortunately the stay-at-home defencemen are kind of getting shuffled to the side. I'm looking over in Europe right now and think-

ing about finishing my career up over there," he says. "I've started a couple of oil-field service companies, so obviously that'll be where I'll be putting a lot of my after-career time. Maybe another year and I'll start looking at what my options are. I'd like to coach, but I don't know what level. I've done my travelling and I'd like to stay closer to the family."

Forget Tjarnqvist, bring back Igor



HEATHER
SMITH

Sports
Commentary

Not to toot my own horn or anything, but I'm a pretty big fan of Igor Ulanov. Some may have already forgotten his rugged face, but I remember him as that luscious Russian-Canadian defenceman who played on the Edmonton Oilers' blue line for a mere 37 games this season. Playing Igor Ulanov for less than half of the regular season should be a crime punishable by death. It's probably a good thing I've never been a dictator.

Oh, hell. I'm going to toot my own horn and declare myself the biggest Igor Ulanov fan west of his family's home in Toronto. I'm the president of his unofficial fan club. I paid a pretty penny for his game-worn jersey from Paul Coffey Night, and I dance around my basement in it when no one is watching. I am clearly the most qualified person on Earth to write this little piece.

Igor Ulanov began his NHL career as a robust young gun in the 1991/92 season, while playing for the Winnipeg Jets. He has played 739 games in fourteen NHL seasons. He has 162 points to call his own—so far. At 36 years old, Ulanov was the oldest player on the Oilers this season, and if he chooses not to retire, I will hold out hope that a team will pick him up for next season. I'm not asking for much, just a little ice time thrown his way now and then. Well, that and plenty of high-definition camera close-ups.

During his latest—and possibly last—NHL season, Ulanov was plagued with a coach who didn't believe in the defenceman's talent. The mid-season acquisition of a pair of shiny new blue-liners sent Ulanov straight to the press box. Admittedly, Ulanov's numbers were less than stellar over the last few seasons, but the raw, Russian passion he brought to every game made him a lovable player.

With every squandered pass, it was



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EDMONTON OILERS

OOOO BABY I LOVE YOUR WAY Heather hearts Igor, no matter what we say.

obvious that Igor put forth a massive amount of effort to prevent the same thing from occurring twice. It didn't always work, but he tried, damn it. Just look at his willingness to throw his face in front of the puck. That kind of sacrifice didn't earn him the respect he deserved.

His off-ice commitment to the team will be missed just as much as his god-like presence on it. Ulanov formed a dinner club so he and his teammates could socialize outside the realm of hockey, without the pressure of thousands of extremely devoted fans breathing down their necks. It was that kind of commitment that caused former teammate Georges Laraque to say about Ulanov, "...even if he doesn't play a game in the playoffs, if we win the Cup he should be the first guy [after captain Jason Smith] to lift it."

So, while Kevin Lowe continues his mad scramble to sign a plethora of

random defencemen that no one has ever heard of after Edmonton's most recent crew couldn't get out of here fast enough, Ulanov will continue to sit patiently in the press box of free agency. He wouldn't ditch a city that puts hockey before personal hygiene. As the average age of the Oilers team declines by the week, the stability that Ulanov brought to the dressing room seems to go unnoticed. While number 55 will likely never hang from the rafters of the Coliseum with Igor Ulanov's name on it, that doesn't make him any less important to this Oilers team.

For every Oilers fan who screamed for Mr Ulanov to go back to Siberia—apparently neglecting to take the time to discover that Krasnokamsk is no where near it—one of us will be silently weeping at his departure. In a time when no one wants to play in Edmonton, it will be sad to see a guy who came here twice take off.

Easy to see why players dislike Edmonton



PAUL
OWEN

Sports
Commentary

Sometimes, I just don't want to be here. I don't mean here in these pages, I mean here in the geographical sense. Don't get me wrong, I love dirty streets, conservative hillbillies and making fun of Calgary—but sometimes, Edmonton can be a terrible place to live. So I can relate to Michael Peca, Jaroslav Spacek, Sergei Samsonov and Chris Pronger's desires to head elsewhere this NHL off-season.

It's not as if there's a lot to like about living here. The weather is terrible, the taxes are high, the pay is low and Cory Cross calls the travel "the worst in the league." Because players get paid in US dollars, they must constantly deal with the exchange rate. Road trips always involve clearing customs.

In Pronger's case, there were clearly family issues that required him to leave the city. Whether these were merely a dislike of Edmonton or one of the more serious—or outlandish—rumours that were flying around town should be of no consequence.

The guy had to make a decision based on what was best for his family and he did so. He's taken a beating in the local media for not liking the city and for going back on his contract, but I don't see Graham Hicks choosing the city of Edmonton over his wife and kids.

There's a reason that the biggest acquisitions this off-season have been Daniel Tjarnqvist and Marty Reasoner: guys don't want to come to Edmonton.

For Peca, who talked about leaving Edmonton as early as January this year, the past season also took many tolls that probably disenchanted him to the city. Peca was billed as a 30-goal scorer and the centremen that the Oilers had lacked since the departure of Doug Weight. Nevermind that Peca had become a defensive specialist and never scored more than 27 goals or 60 points in an NHL season. Peca was blamed all season long for underperforming on his hefty \$3.99 million contract, but Kevin Lowe rarely took heat for acquiring that hefty contract.

The guy dealt with so much fan displeasure that it's easy to see why he wouldn't want to stay here.

For a guy like Samsonov, a pure offensive player with loads of skill but a tendency to be lazy on the ice, Edmonton was the worst possible fit. The Oilers stifling defensive system kept Samsonov from finding the open ice that he needs to be effective. Sammy was a liability defensively and that kept Craig MacTavish from trusting him at the end of a close game. In the end, Samsonov, a top-line talent, was left to play as a second-line winger on a line used less often than the checkers were. It's easy to see why he'd want out.

It's really time for a reaction besides "Holy Shit! How can you not love Edmonton? You're a God when you play here!" when someone leaves town or doesn't sign here as a free agent. There's a reason that the biggest acquisitions this off-season have been Daniel Tjarnqvist and Marty Reasoner: guys don't want to come to Edmonton. The pay is too low, the weather too bad and the fans too deluded. The '80s are over with, and the sooner Edmonton fans stop expecting Ales Hemsky to be the next Jari Kurri and Ryan Smyth to be the next Messier, the sooner players will realize that the fan support in Edmonton is a blessing, instead of the curse it is now.

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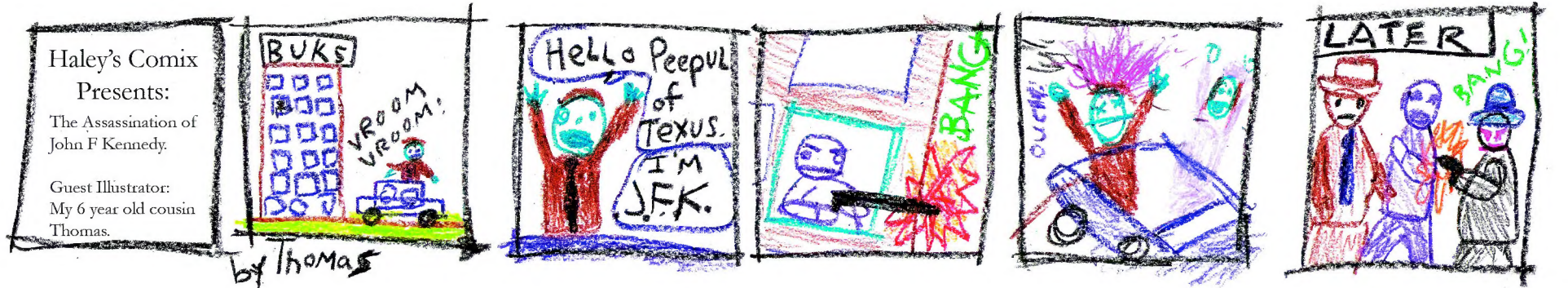


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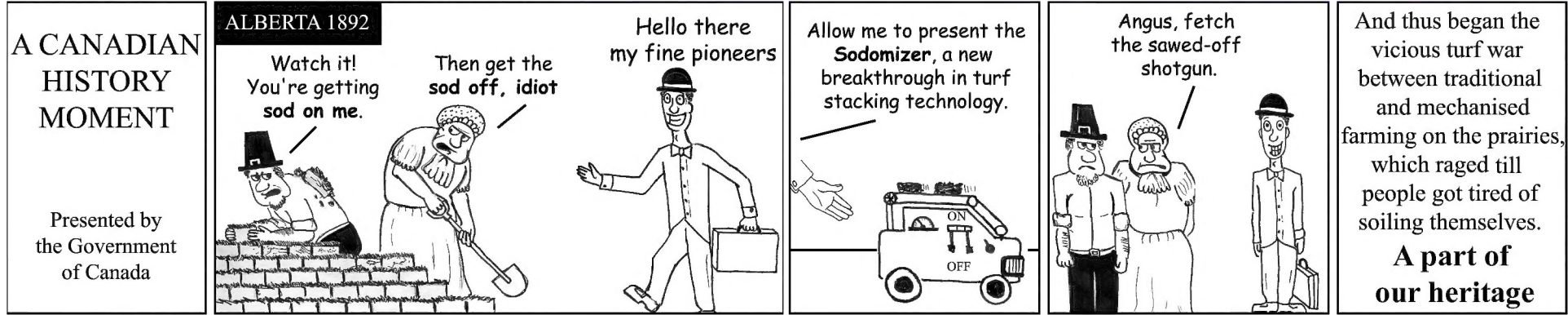
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HALEY’S COMIX by Mike Robertson



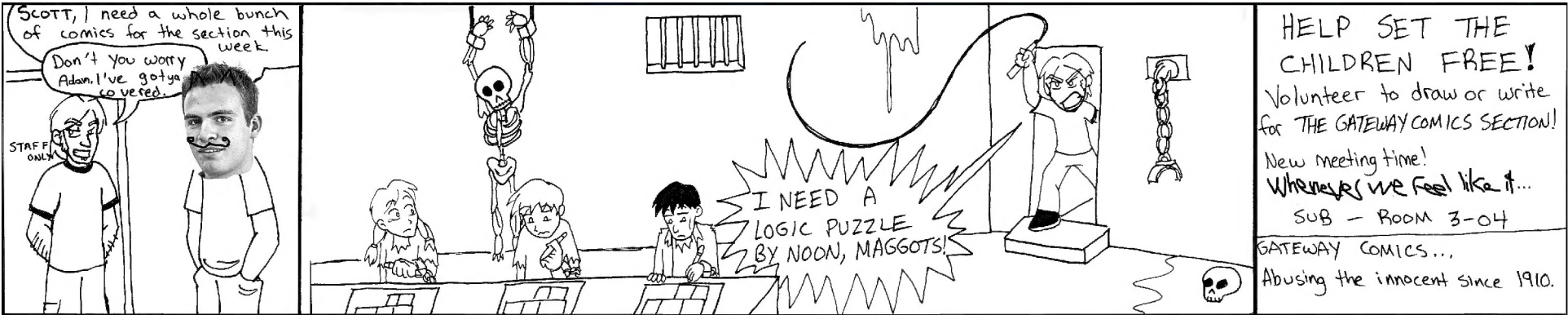
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